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POLICE IN AMERICA

CRIME PREVENTION

Arthur Woods

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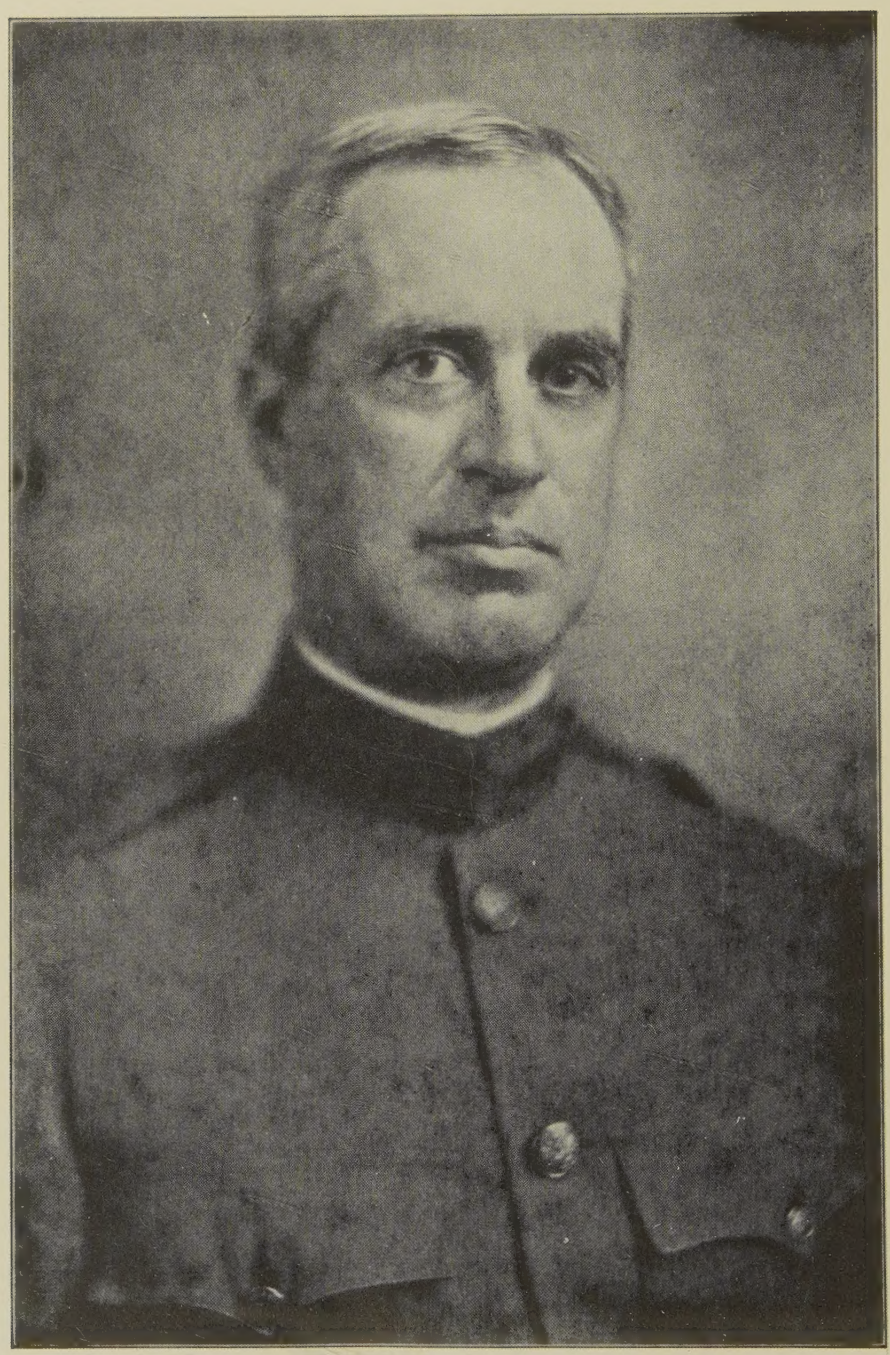

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CRIME PREVENTION

BY

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A Lecture on the Spencer Trask Foundation, delivered at Princeton University

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INTRODUCTION

CRIME PREVENTION

INTRODUCTION

Within the limits of this text it is of course not possible to handle with any approach to thoroughness such a comprehensive subject as the prevention of crime. The causes of crime are too various, and many of them are of such a character as to lead an investigator far afield for many an absorbing month if he would learn all about them. My object in these pages, therefore, has been simply to tell of some of the things we learned and did in New York during the term of not quite four years that I had the honor of serving the city as Police Commissioner.

We learned that most crimes are not hindered by the conventional methods of police protection, and we tried, while

cleaving to conventional methods and steadily improving them, to devise new methods which should tend to complement the older ones. Further, we became convinced that from every point of view, it was the duty of police not only to keep criminals from committing crime, but to keep people from becoming criminals. And the Deputy Commissioners and I believed that with the loyal and interested cooperation of the splendid personnel of the New York Force, we had made a beginning which can be developed so that there will be as much improvement in preventing crime and criminals in our midst as there has been in preventing fire in factories, or disease in armies.

Lawbreakers we shall probably have with us for a goodly number of generations yet, but we can persistently reduce their ranks by studying causes and taking preventive action. Further, we can steadily make it more and more hard for them

to operate by improving our protective measures, and gradually educating the public to take the simple precautions that will help so much, yet are so easy to practice.

Whatever new methods are tried, however, we must not neglect the old, for the essential basis of all good police work is the character and physical power of the individual men. They must be strong of body, stout of soul—sturdy, two-fisted specimens, knowing how to hold themselves in restraint even under severe provocation, yet prompt and powerful to act with force and uncompromising vigor when only that will maintain order and protect the law-abiding.

I

THE CONVENTIONAL POLICE METHODS

THE CONVENTIONAL POLICE METHODS

Every one is familiar with the figure of the policeman on post. Fundamentally he represents law, protection, order. He is there on behalf of the regular, orderly life of the neighborhood, to prevent any one from being disorderly, and to catch any person, if he can, who tries to break the law or who interferes with the rights of those who obey it. A person with crime in his mind will hardly try to commit it in sight of the policeman, and, other things being equal, he will get just as far from the policeman as he can before he does anything wrong.

I suppose it depends upon the individual officer and the individual thief, on their personal characteristics and tempera-

ments, as to how far away and how strongly the officer's presence restrains the thief from committing crime. But however short a distance the influence goes, and however weakly it operates, it is restraining and preventive. Conceivably, if there were an alert, capable patrolman on each city block, no crime would be committed in our streets. Such police pervasiveness would be a fairly sure preventive of street hold-ups, of pocket picking, unless the crowd should be large enough to give friendly shelter, of highway robbery, stealing from trucks and delivery or express wagons, and other forms of crime that are done in the open.

Adequate policing of the streets cannot, however, be expected to prevent all sorts of crime. The patrolman, to be sure, can properly be held responsible if a hold-up man knocks down and robs a citizen in the street; this is the sort of crime which should be prevented by the regular patrol-

ling force. Or, if a store is broken into by a burglar working from the street, the patrolman assigned to that post must be held to have been lax in the performance of duty. On the other hand, if the burglar gains access to a house from a fire-escape which leads up from the back yard, the patrolling force is, to say the least, far less responsible for the crime than if the house had been broken into from the street—uniformed policemen do not patrol back yards. Still further, if the crime is committed by a dishonest servant, is what is commonly called "an inside job," it is a variety of crime still less preventable by the conventional methods of patrol.

The regular uniformed patrol is always supplemented by a detective force, which also exerts a preventive influence, although detective work is primarily for the purpose of detecting the criminal who has already committed a crime. This detective preventive work adds strength to the preventive efforts of the uniformed force.

Good detective work keeps the criminal from taking chances that he would take without an uneasy thought in cities where the men in plain clothes were lazy or incompetent or were willing to come to a gentlemen's agreement with him. If a pickpocket feels there are a lot of innocent-looking detectives prowling around who know the ways of the trade, and are acquainted with the faces and figures of the leading operatives, he will be apt to forgo the temptation even of large and careless crowds in that city, and will cleave to other towns where the police are not so fussy about protecting property. And if a criminal of any kind feels that the detectives of any city are a relentless lot of spoil-sports, who won't be good fellows, who will keep everlastingly on the trail of the lawbreaker, not just while the newspapers are featuring the crime, but after it has been forgotten by all except the poor family whose savings of years were stolen,

or by the stricken widow and children of the murdered man, months and years after—the criminal will be apt to shun that city. There are crimes that were done in New York years ago which, though dead as far as the public memory of them goes, are just as living in the files of the Detective Bureau and in the minds of the detectives working on them as they were twenty-four hours after they were committed.

These are the conventional police methods of preventing crime, and they are good methods. To give them a reasonable chance of success, in the first place a sufficient number of policemen is required. It is impossible to lay down any fixed ratio as to the number of policemen a city should have. It might be thought that observation and experimentation would enable an expert to come to the conclusion that in a large city one policeman would be necessary to every five hundred, or thousand, or

fifteen hundred of the population. Other factors however, besides the size of the population must be given at least equal consideration, such as mileage of streets, the currents in which the population floats, the character of population, the difference between the day population and the night population—lower Manhattan, for instance, and Brooklyn—the amount of traffic in the streets. Then, again, we must realize that scientific policing of a city is comparatively a new phenomenon in our American life and that whereas with present methods police forces may seem too small in number, yet when sounder methods are devised a smaller number of more efficient men may do the work better. As things stand, we must judge largely by results, and if the uniformed force is to exert the preventive pressure which we expect it to, there must be enough men for this particular method of crime prevention, street patrol being a form of policing

which from its very nature calls for a large number of officers.

Uniformed patrol of the streets used to consist simply of having policemen assigned to posts and required to stay on them, walking up and down in a prescribed way. I have always believed that the largest amount of freedom of action and of discretion, consistent with proper control, should be given to the individual officer. He works alone, without superiors at hand to whom he can look for orders; he is in full control, within the limits of his post, of protecting the lives and property of people who live there or pass by. He should not be tied up with minute instructions, or confined to narrowly prescribed methods, but should be given latitude for action commensurate with his responsibility, and then be held to results. The old methods not merely gave him less discretion, but enforced the same scheme of patrol throughout all parts of the city,

irrespective of the peculiar characteristics of different neighborhoods—and neighborhoods in big modern cities vary radically in character and need different police treatment.

One afternoon, for example, I was out on a trip of inspection covering the whole island of Manhattan. During the early part of the afternoon I was in the crowded lower East Side, and went the whole length of Rivington Street, which is one of the world's most densely populated streets; I have been told that one block in Rivington Street contains more people than any other equal area in the world. Toward the end of the afternoon I reached the upper northwest part of the island of Manhattan, and while climbing up a hill on a narrow, soft, muddy road, shut in by bushes and trees on both sides, with no house in sight, a wild rabbit suddenly scuttled across the road in front of me. It is evident that the inhabi-

tants of Rivington Street and the rabbits of northwest Manhattan do not need the same kind of policing. Thickly populated parts of the city must have foot patrol, and the posts must be short enough for effective work, not more than a few blocks long. The outlying parts of a great city, however, places such as you find in some parts of Queens, of Richmond, of the Bronx, would not be as well served by this kind of policing as they would by an entirely different method.

What a district of this kind needs is not large numbers of policemen patrolling peaceful streets where nothing ever happens; it needs a patrol on bicycle, motorcycle, or in automobile, that is capable of covering a lot of ground, and it needs frequent sub-stations scattered all through the territory, in each little settlement, connected by telephone, so that the wrongdoer knows that policemen are planted all through the neighborhood, and the neigh-

borhood knows that a policeman can be summoned by telephone and is near enough so that he can reach any part of the district in certainly not more than five minutes. In New York we have given intensive study to the needs of every precinct in the Greater City, and have tried to apply to each the particular method of patrolling which would best accomplish the purpose aimed at. Along these newer lines of patrol great improvement has been made, but greater progress remains for the future, and continual revision and readaptation of methods are necessary as conditions change.

Detective work also has improved in skill and in method. About ten years ago I was Deputy Commissioner in charge of the Detective Bureau in New York. I was a bit shocked, very early in my career there, to find that no proper record was kept of the assignment of cases to detectives, and of the results achieved by detec-

tives working on them. Such a system was at once installed, and one morning while talking to an experienced detective about a case he was working on I asked him what he thought of this new system of keeping account of cases.

"Well, Commissioner," he answered, "it may be all right. I guess, perhaps, it's pretty good. It certainly keeps us guessing, but it's different from the old way. In the old way when a 'squeal' came in over the telephone the lieutenant at the desk wrote it down on a piece of paper and handed it to a detective: 'Here, Bill,' he'd say, 'look that up.' Bill took the paper, put it in his pocket, and when the paper wore out the case was closed."

The detective in his work can be helped just as much by modern science and modern improved methods of organization and operation as can any other man in any other profession or line of business. Modern methods won't make a good detective

out of a poor one any more than they will make a good salesman out of a poor one, or a good electrician. But they will help a capable man to do his job better, whether that job be protecting life on the streets of a city, or saving life attacked by disease.

II

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

It is only recently that we have been realizing that the work of the guardians of law and order does not cease even when they have tried to do the best possible with their uniformed patrolling force and their plain-clothes detective bureau. These forces are powerful for prevention; are probably more powerful than any other form of police work, but there are forms of crime which these methods of policing cannot cope with. A police captain with whom I was talking a few months ago about keeping down crime in his precinct said that the figures I showed him were true, but that the police were not responsible. It was all "inside jobs," he said; and the police can't be expected to stop that sort of thing. How can the po-

lice be criticized if a lady's jewels are stolen by a dishonest servant girl?

This has been the time-honored conception of the limits of police effort; the attitude has naturally been to disclaim responsibility for any crime that was committed in a way which the conventional methods of police work could not be expected to meet. If the burglar chose to work in a way that didn't run athwart the regular police methods—well, it was hard luck on the poor citizen!

Given perfect patrolling work, perfect (if there is such a thing) detective work, along the conventional lines, what proportion of crimes would still be committed? I discussed this at an Inspectors' meeting some time ago. One Inspector said it was "fifty-fifty," meaning that one-half the crimes that were then being committed in his district could not be prevented, even if the regular patrol and detective work were as good as they could be. This Inspector

had a district thickly populated with foreigners. An old experienced Inspector, whose district is largely residential, on the west side of Manhattan, said he believed only one per cent of the crime in his district could be prevented by perfect police work. The other estimates varied between these two. If these men were right in their estimates—and they were the highest officers on the New York Force—if from fifty to ninety-nine per cent. of crime would be committed in spite of perfect police work along the conventional lines—you can see why it is that we are cudgelling our brains to try to devise new methods, even if unconventional, with which to fight the outlaw.

Educating the citizen in self-protection is one of the principal efforts we have been making along these lines. We have published circulars "How to Protect Yourself"; we have had moving picture films made and shown all over the city, illustrat-

ing the fatal results of carelessness in leaving doors unlocked, handbags easy to open, notices on the bell that nobody was home, which constituted, in effect, an invitation to the burglar to make himself at home. We have advised with business houses as to the best methods of protecting them and have sent experts to inspect and suggest; we have consulted with various insurance people as to better methods of preventing the very things they were insuring against. We have sent policemen to talk to children in the schools and to various groups of employees. And we have tried to make each policeman a little educating center in himself. We were warned before starting this that we were opening the avenue of attack from unfriendly critics who would be able to taunt us about our inability to do the police work of the city, inasmuch as we were telling people that they must protect themselves. People cooperated heartily, however, and the

results have certainly been good, although the work is only begun.

A very large percentage of crimes committed in large cities nowadays are the handiwork of dishonest employees. The situation is aggravated by the ease of getting employment now because of war conditions, and the corresponding difficulty of finding employees. Employers are not so cautious as they used to be about requiring references, so almost any one can get a position. This has meant inevitably that it has been difficult to keep down the number of crimes committed by dishonest employees. Now that is something which the policeman on post cannot possibly prevent. He cannot prevent you from hiring a dishonest servant and from going out some day and leaving that dishonest servant full and complete opportunity to look over your belongings and take whatever she may choose. The only thing that can prevent this, or tend toward prevent-

ing it, is your own scrupulousness in examining references, verifying them, and making sure that the person you employ is the person the reference refers to.

III

DIMINISHING THE SUPPLY

DIMINISHING THE SUPPLY

These methods of crime prevention are good, and are effective if carried out by an ambitious, self-respecting force of men intelligently directed. The patrol force developed to its maximum of efficiency, a detective force of keen men helped by everything that modern research can do for it, and both these methods supplemented by the exercise of ordinary precautions on the part of the people of a city—all this cannot help making the work of the thief and the burglar much harder. But even this does not get to the root of the evil, for it fails to diminish the supply of criminals. These methods make it hard for the criminal to do his job; they worry him, make him wary and nervous and often cause him to ply his trade in some other

city, but that does not prevent people from becoming criminals. One day a very skilful pickpocket was brought into Headquarters. He was righteously indignant. He said he had promised not to do anything in New York and he hadn't; just because he was on his way to turn a trick in a neighboring city he may have looked suspicious, he admitted, but there was no reason why the New York people should bother themselves about him!

All these matters of police work and of public precaution are restraining and bothersome to the thief. If persistently carried out and steadily improved they cannot fail to result in fewer crimes being attempted, and in more criminals being arrested.

Unless a police force, however, goes back of this and tries to do something to diminish the supply of criminals, I believe it is not fulfilling its full duty to the public. The process of arresting a burglar,

convicting him, sending him to jail for a few months or years, and then letting him out, still a burglar, probably a more skilful one, free to go to work and break into our homes again, until we happen to catch him again and send him to jail again—we delude ourselves if we feel that this constitutes any real effort to stamp out crime in a community. The police force, the prosecuting attorney, the courts, become simply sieves through which criminals are sifted, being for a while before the court, in the meshes for a while, but ultimately dropping through, none the worse for their experience as far as their ability to steal goes, and all the more certain from their experience to continue to try to earn their living by lawbreaking.

In this connection I often think of the "swat the fly" campaigns. Flies are nuisances. They carry and breed disease. It is a wholesome thing to swat them, the more the better, but there always seem to

be about as many flies the next day and the next week and the next year, in spite of the vigor of the swatting campaign. And we realize that necessary as it is to give a lusty whack at each individual fly whenever we can reach him, we shall not do any radical work in the job of ridding the community of flies unless we get at the breeding grounds. It is so with criminals. It is good to arrest and convict them just as it is good to swat the flies, but we shall never go far toward ridding the community of criminals until we get at the breeding places. We must drain the swamps of crime as they drained the swamps in Cuba to get rid of the yellow fever mosquitoes.

IV

POVERTY

POVERTY

What are the causes of crime? Many have sought the answer. Studies have been made of convicts, seasoned criminals who know no way to earn an honest living but by crime. Studies have been made too of first offenders, people apparently normal, to see what it was that tempted them off the straight and narrow path.

We are too apt to believe that there is a clear division between criminals and "the rest of us." By criminals we mean those low-browed, hard-faced inhabitants of prison cells, who are let loose from time to time, far too often for our comfort or peace of mind, to prey upon us, to sneak into our bedrooms at dead of night and take what we have, looking at our trembling selves meanwhile over the cold blue

barrel of a pistol. There are such desperadoes, it is true, who coolly and systematically pursue the trade of house-breaking and stealing, with murder thrown in if necessary. They are the professionals. In addition to these, however, are what might be called the amateur criminals, who steal only under the stress of one kind of circumstance or another, often after a genuine fight to resist the temptation. The line between the habitual and the casual criminal is hard to draw, just as it is in a very real sense between an offender who is caught, convicted, and placed behind iron bars, and one who isn't caught. If every one of us who offends against a Federal, or State, or city law or ordinance were caught and convicted, this earth would be inhabited mostly by "convicts." The more one works among breakers of the law, the more one realizes the depth of truth and broad applicability of the well known remark of John Newton, when he

saw a miserable criminal being taken by under guard: "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Newton."

I have seen many a prisoner who had been inexorably, it almost seemed with deliberate purpose, driven step by step straight into an eddy of fate where there seemed nothing else to do but steal. And one could not help wondering whether "the rest of us," caught in the same swirling current, would have done any better.

It might be objected that this sort of speculation is no part of the policeman's job, that his duty is to treat all alike, to take into custody any person who breaks a law, be he professional or amateur, and to leave to the courts the question of the proper treatment of the case. If those in charge of police forces do not look into this sort of thing, however, they are leaving undone something that would help them to prevent crime.

We must of course recognize the fact that police forces cannot be expected to abolish poverty. This is a problem perhaps more worth the solving than any other that confronts us, but one which wise men all through the ages have been trying to find the answer to, without success. No, the police cannot hope to grapple with the whole, involved social and economic question of poverty. This does not mean, however, that they should not study poverty among other causes of crime, for the purpose of seeing if something, even if only a very little, might not be done to save a few sorely tempted and poverty-stricken persons from dropping into crime.

The winter of 1915-16 was a hard one. Hundreds and thousands of people could not get work who were willing and eager to go to work, and were qualified to fill jobs that in normal times would yield a comfortable living. Capable workingmen

could not find anything to do, because of the abnormal economic conditions, not because of any fault of their own, and there seemed to be no near prospect of relief. What were they to do? Hundreds and thousands of people, just as honest and self-respecting as any one else in the city, were being slowly but hopelessly driven into the narrowing way from which the only outlet appeared to be death or crime.

We believed it was the duty of the police, to put it coldly, to protect the public by preventing as much as possible of the crime that might be committed by these unfortunate people in their distress, and I know that the members of the police force looked upon this duty as a privilege and took genuine personal satisfaction in doing all they could in the way of relief. We felt that it would be possible for the police to help in blunting the keen, merciless edge of poverty in some cases at any rate, and we should have felt our efforts

had been worth while if we had succeeded in only a very few instances. For we were not merely protecting the public against crime, but saving individuals from what might be the indelible stain of the criminal. The police should be known in a community as the People's Friends; too long have they had to accept the rôle of enemies. They should try just as strongly to make things pleasant for the law-abiding, as they do to make things hot for the law-defying. Clearly, here were law-abiding people in bitter trouble, in danger, some of them, of being forced into the ranks of the law-defying, and the police might help prevent it.

We set out to devise a plan whereby any policeman could provide immediate relief when he came across a case of urgent distress. At once we found that there were few policemen of any number of years' service to whom relief of those in trouble was any new story. We came across

cases that warmed one's heart, where policemen, sometimes individually, sometimes taking up collections in the back room of the Station House, had gone down into their own pockets to help out pitiful cases. No one had ever talked much about this sort of thing, the policemen never expected to get any credit for it; they were paid by the satisfaction one human being gets at being able to help out another who at the time is worse off than he is.

To make quick relief possible we raised a fund, which ultimately amounted to $2800. Of this, $1900 was contributed by members of the Force. A plan was worked out which provided the captain of every precinct with books of green tickets, each marked "ten cents." The captains made arrangements with a grocer, a fuel dealer, and a restaurant keeper in their neighborhood to honor these tickets, sending their accounts to Headquarters

every week, where they would be paid by check. This plan of payment was decided on because the Committee of Police Inspectors in charge had urged that a plan be devised under which no policeman would handle any money, so that there could not possibly be any allegation of graft.

In any part of the city, therefore, when any policeman came across a case of great distress, he took the suffering person to the Station House, where the captain or lieutenant in charge would provide at once for his immediate needs, and would then put him in touch with some association, or church, or benevolent individual, who would continue to help until the person were again self-supporting. The police would not drop the case upon referring it in this way, but would keep in touch with it afterward, to see what progress was being made; and if there did not seem to be proper progress, the policeman

again stepped in, and tried something else. A great many hundreds of cases during the hard winter of 1915-16 were relieved by the police in this way, and so much money that had been given out was considered as a loan and later returned, that the original fund was not used up until late in the year 1917. It was our aim, and to our best belief we succeeded in it, to give effective relief to every case of great distress that came to the attention of any policeman.

Besides this system of relief, the police found a great many jobs for people who were out of work. Care had to be used in this, so that an employer would not simply discharge someone to create a vacancy which he might fill in such a way as to do a favor to a policeman—a favor which he brightly looked forward to having returned with interest! The positions were very rarely as good as the men were fitted to fill, but they served to keep the wolf

away from a family's door for a while, and they made it possible for the men to live and maintain self-respect.

Owing to the scarcity of employment we frequently found it necessary to create jobs where none had existed before. These positions, however, were all of a kind which, when filled, would be of real benefit to the employer; in this way no sense of charity, given or received, could enter into the agreement. The most successful experiment of this kind was the employment of a man by several people living in a city block to keep the street and sidewalks clean around that block, to pick up waste paper and other litter, to tidy areaways and generally to supplement the work of the Street Cleaning Department. We tried to get one hundred persons on a block to subscribe ten cents each, per week, making in all a weekly wage of $10 for the man thus employed. We always chose for the work a man who was *bona fide* a

resident of New York, who could not get work at his regular trade, and who had a family to support. Some hundreds of families were kept together by this scheme, who had been reduced to bitter privation and hopelessness.

I shall never forget one case which happened that winter, where the police did not prevent a crime, it is true, though the cure followed so fast as possibly to wipe out the remembrance of the offence. As a policeman, late in the afternoon, was rounding a corner on the lower west side of the Island of Manhattan, he heard a crash of glass. Three-quarters of the way down the block was a man standing in the street, having just thrown something which turned out later to be a paving stone, through a plate-glass show window. The officer started after the criminal to take him into custody, but the man did not run, submitted to arrest, and went along quietly to the Station

House. The policeman asked him why he had done it, and after a little coaxing he told his story.

The prisoner was a skilled mechanic who always had earned good wages. He had married and was the father of two young children. He had lost his job some months before, when the factory let go more than half its workmen, and although he had tried everything he could, was unable to get another one. His savings had dwindled, and disappeared. He borrowed what he could, but after a while could borrow no more. All was gone, and it was one of the winter's coldest days. There had been no heat in the miserable little room his whole family were living in, they had been able to get no mouthful of food, and most of their warm clothing had been pawned.

He was "plain down and out," he said. There seemed to be no honest road left open. Suddenly the idea occurred to him

to break the window, for no other reason than that something *had* to be done and he could think of nothing better to do. So in sheer desperation he hurled the paving stone.

What else could he have done, he asked the policeman.

And the policeman could not answer—neither could I—neither could you.

The first thing the captain of the precinct did was to send fuel, clothing and food to the mother and the little ones. He gave the prisoner a good meal and started to find him a job.

The next morning when he was arraigned in court, the magistrate was informed of the circumstances of the case, and was told if he would release the prisoner on a suspended sentence, the police had a job waiting for him. He did this gladly, and took occasion to congratulate the police on the way they had handled

the case. So a man was saved from crime, and a family was reunited, where all hope had gone.

The problem of poverty in these times is one that has been much studied, and about which many theories have been given birth. The police force does not attempt to solve it; many members of police forces may not realize that such a problem exists. Police forces, however, and every member of them, can be expected and can be relied on to do their part in the saving work of affording quick relief in cases of poverty where the strain has reached the breaking point. And besides being the kind of work that would appeal to every rightminded human being, it is strictly proper police work also, for it operates directly to decrease crime.

V

MENTAL DEFECTIVES

MENTAL DEFECTIVES

Lombroso, long regarded as the authority, believed that some of us are born to be criminals. I used to believe that this was so, although I always instinctively rebelled against it. My belief was shaken one day when, fresh from a prolonged study of the book, I looked into a mirror and was confronted with more of the criminal characteristics than I cared to confess to. My instinctive and hopeful reaction against it has been supported by later study and by the researches of modern criminologists. It must be recognized, on the other hand, that some babies come into the world with poorer endowments than others, and that the deficiencies may be so serious as to start the unfortunate child on the journey of life wholly incapable of

weathering its storms and trials. Such an individual more easily falls a prey to temptation, has less power of resistance, is comparatively unable to hold to the ways ordered by the law-abiding majority.

There are many of these defectives in the criminal ranks, and they constitute a big class of criminals which has not been clearly recognized. We all of us know people who, we think, are a bit queer, and possibly some of our acquaintances think we may be a little unusual in some of our ways and manners and customs. We don't bother much about this and it certainly almost never occurs to any of us to connect our queer acquaintance with the idea that he might be a criminal. We are right in not so connecting him, for it would be very far from the fact to state that all persons who are a little queer, a little abnormal, are criminals. It is not so far from the fact, however, to state that persons who are queer to the extent of being

abnormal probably lack strong wills, and are without the power of inhibition which would keep them from yielding to strong temptation. I cannot discuss this as an expert psychiatrist, but it seems to me that roughly it is a matter of power of character, the defective being so under-equipped mentally as to weaken his will, and thereby his character, making him more yielding to the impulses of the moment than the normally equipped human being.

A mental defective is a person whose brain development halted at some time during his young life, so that he grew up with the body of an adult, but the mind of a child. Defectives are classified according to the age at which the brain stopped growing. Every one realizes that a child is not responsible, and must be watched and taken care of and treated with kindliness and patience until it grows up and can take care of itself. No one

would think of turning a child loose on its own resources, and no one minds particularly if children do things which are characteristic and tolerated in children, but which would not be expected of grown-ups. We know how easily children are led, we know how their characters have to be formed, how crude their ideas of truth-telling and responsibility are, and we treat them in the full recognition of these facts, making allowances, and accepting the job of bringing them up.

The defective has the limited brain development of a child with all its lack of responsibility, its failure to understand the obligations of telling the truth, of duty to others, of restraint, of consideration. But whereas in the child limited physical power accompanies this limited character development, it is quite otherwise with the grown-up defective, in whom we find the dangerous combination of the mind of a child governing the body of an adult.

What we should never call crime if done by a child becomes crime when done by an adult. These mental defectives, with capable bodies, are often experts in crime, but are no more responsible for what they do than a child would be.

The most dangerous class is, I suppose, that which is nearest to the normal, for an insane person or a person who is extremely defective is easily distinguished and looked out for. Although the progress of scientists in the study of mental abnormality has been rapid, it is still very difficult to determine borderline cases, to tell surely whether a patient is a little defective mentally, or perhaps only a little stupid. In many country districts we find the village idiot, whom every one knows and tolerates and has a kindly word for. But if a defective is close to the borderline he is hard to distinguish, and all the more a menace. It is probably true that a large number of persons are somewhat mentally defective,

but are fortunate enough to grow up under conditions where they have such a careful education and are exposed to so few temptations that the deficiency is never noticed. I cannot emphasize too strongly that the mental defective is not *ipso facto* a criminal. If subjected to temptation, however, he falls more easily, and therefore is more likely than the normal man to become a criminal.

A little while ago a man was brought into the Psychopathic Laboratory which we started at Police Headquarters. He had been arrested on the charge of robbery. His fingerprints showed that in 1910 he had been convicted of felonious assault and sentenced to Elmira Reformatory. In 1913 he was convicted of grand larceny and sentenced to the City Penitentiary. In 1916 he was convicted of disorderly conduct and sent to the workhouse. Here he was again, after three terms in prison. Before arraigning him in

court this time we had him examined. The doctors found that his father had been intemperate and tuberculous. The mother had been a hard-working woman but practically all the burden of supporting the family was on her shoulders, so she could not give much attention to bringing him up in the way he should go. He had a brother who was an intemperate longshoreman, and a sister who had always seemed queer, and who, we found, was subject to fainting fits. As a boy in school he was a persistent truant, and he didn't seem to take hold of his studies at all. When he left school and started to work he couldn't keep a job any length of time, leaving one after another without any apparent reason; and when he married he didn't show normal affection or responsibility toward wife and children. For some time he did nothing toward their support. Every Saturday evening when work was over he started to drown the

cares of the week, and was unfit for work Monday morning. He seemed to have no outside interest except drink, cards and shooting crap. Ever since he could remember he had been subject to fits. As he described it, once in a while he'd stiffen out and become unconscious, even when sitting down. He wasn't interested in the examination the doctors made of him, taking it all very phlegmatically. The doctors' diagnosis was that the man was a mental defective. Nothing could be much more certain than that if the machinery of law and order keeps on sending him to jail he will keep on committing crime whenever he comes out.

We had one rather extreme case, of a boy 18 years old, who was born in Massachusetts and brought up on a farm there. He went to school until about four years ago and, according to his own account, got along passably. Recently it became clear to him that he couldn't continue doing

nothing, but would have to get some work, so he headed himself toward the Mecca of a great many persons from all parts of the earth and landed in New York. He didn't have any money to speak of, and in the course of his explorations of the city fell in with a thief, who suggested that he pawn a watch which the thief had stolen. They were caught while doing this and placed under arrest. When we sent this boy to court a letter was addressed to the magistrate stating that the boy was feeble in mind, untrained in useful work, and might easily be led into crime. He was found guilty and sent to the New York City Reformatory, and unless something out of the natural range of expectation intervenes he probably is starting out on a life career of crime. He should, of course, never have been sent to jail, and should have been treated not as a criminal, but as an irresponsible patient. Although 18 years old the mental development of this boy was that of a child of about 8 years.

A week later another boy was arrested, charged with burglary. He was 15 years old, had previously been before the Children's Court and there sentenced to the House of Refuge. A brother of his had been arrested for shooting a girl in 1914. When we sent this boy to court we wrote to the magistrate that he was "notably feeble minded," and suggested that arrangements should be made for his permanent residence in an institution for the feeble minded, but he was committed to the House of Refuge, and will probably join the boy who went in a few days ahead of him in a career of lawbreaking.

In the same month that these two boys were brought in, a girl 16 years old, a native of New York State, was arrested. We found that she had a wretched school record, that her family had always been busily occupied trying to keep her out of trouble. She married a year ago because she thought she was pregnant. For a

while she separated from her husband, but recently had been living with him in a most squalid state. We called the attention of the magistrate to her, she was acquitted in the court of General Sessions and is now at liberty, free to bear a brood of feeble minded children. And that is, of course, one of the most serious aspects of the whole situation: the undoubted fact that these mental defectives being permitted to stay at large are bearing children and thereby increasing their numbers.

A few days after the arrest of the girl just described, a New York boy sixteen and a half years old was brought in. His employer left him in charge of a truck in which were four bundles, while he went away to get a horse blanket. As soon as he disappeared the boy drove off, delivering all the bundles properly, but then trying to sell the horse and truck, going to several different persons. He drove to Brooklyn and then back again. The loss

of the truck was reported to the police, and after seven hours the boy was located. He explained he didn't think he had been well treated by the family he lived with, so decided to sell the horse and wagon in order to get some money with which to go and live by himself. Examination showed that his mental ability was about that of a 6-year-old child. His queerness was so clear that the arresting officer had noticed it and had planned to send the boy to Bellevue Hospital for observation. We wrote the magistrate telling him it was plainly a case of feeblemindedness and suggesting that he be confined to an institution. He was, however, held in $1500 bail for the grand jury, which discharged him, and we have not been able to locate him since. It is wrong that such a boy be permitted to be at large.

Taking as a basis the results we have got with the Psychopathic Laboratory at Police Headquarters we figure that there

are on the average twenty-five persons a day arrested in New York who are mentally defective. Many of these probably would never have committed crime except for this abnormality. The problem is what to do with these unfortunate underdeveloped individuals who have fallen into crime. It seems clear that we should not rest simply with punishing them; punishment is of doubtful value anyway, except as it may persuade to better things. Punishing a criminal of this type cannot lead to anything better. It leads to nothing but the life of crime. Its whole influence works toward lessening whatever chance a person may have of wrenching himself loose from his bad habits and turning over a new leaf. In jail, the whole atmosphere, the associations, every one with whom he comes in contact savors of crime and criminality and of following the wrong path. The weak mind of the defective is subjected to exactly the wrong

kind of influence. He can't help coming to regard crime as the normal order of things. It is all he hears about. Even if he had normal mental powers and trained judgment it would be something of a task to withstand these vicious influences; one of his meager development cannot do much but yield.

Although it is clear that the present practice of committing the defective criminal to prison is wrong, it is equally clear that he should not be simply turned loose on the public. Plainly the proper course of action is to segregate him in some sort of institution. Instead of putting him in an ordinary jail, however, this institution should be rather of the hospital type, which would receive such an inmate to keep until cured. He has shown that he is dangerous to the community; has demonstrated it by performing a criminal act. Examination has shown that he is mentally subnormal, so that although we can't at

all say that he was not responsible for the crime he committed, yet we must recognize the fact that he is not to be classed in the same category as a normal, deliberate criminal. There is a good chance, in other words, in the case of a defective that if he could be mentally cured he would be rid of his criminal tendency.

Society has no wish to punish for the sake of punishing. Its real object in committing offenders to institutions is, although it does not always recognize this, to put them where they can do no harm, in the vague, optimistically irresponsible hope that they may learn better by the time they come out, and in sublime indifference to the fact that most of them, instead of learning better, learn worse. Society's greatest task with reference to criminals is to protect itself. It should treat the criminal in the way best calculated to protect itself. The defective, therefore, should be given a chance by being placed in an in-

stitution where expert effort will be made to cure him and return him to the life of the world again with a normal mind in a normal body. If expert treatment cannot accomplish this the patient should be kept in the institution for the rest of his natural life, segregated so that he cannot war on the law-abiding, and cannot beget defective children.

The crop of defectives is steadily increasing, since they are free to marry and bring forth children, and the individual defective who pays the specified penalty for his crime steadily progresses in criminal proficiency. Instead of putting him under the care of skilled and kindly doctors, he is under the influence of shrewd, unscrupulous criminals, yet if the doctors should have as good success in their efforts as the criminals have in theirs, it is fair to conclude that our supply of criminal defectives would soon disappear.

This is radical treatment but we have

tried the other kind of treatment long enough to see that it won't work. From other points of view besides the criminal it is clear that the need is imperative for grappling with the question of the mental defective, and trying to free the community of him. And from the criminal point of view alone, we should not need to have so many policemen by a goodly percentage even if we went no further in the matter than to ordain that such mental defectives as are convicted of crime should be immured until cured.

VI

DRINK AND DRUGS

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Drink and drugs are silent partners in many a crime. I sometimes think of them as a means by which a person born normal makes himself a defective (certainly and fairly speedily a moral defective, and if he persist, very likely physically and mentally defective) and one cannot but wonder whether these self-made defectives should not be treated the same way as born defectives; confined and isolated until cured. It does no lasting good to give them thirty days or six months or six years or whatever the fixed term may be. You don't send a diseased person to a hospital for a fixed term, but until cured. You don't send a smallpox patient into an isolation hospital to stay there for a fixed term; you keep him there until he is cured or until he dies

—he must stay there until he ceases to be a menace to the public. In looking at the matter from the point of view of the public—a vantage point often loudly claimed but too seldom actually occupied—we should not release a defective, especially if he has got in the habit of crime, whether he was born subnormal or made himself subnormal by drink or drug—we should not release him to prey on the public any more than we should release the leper or cholera patient to infect the public with disease.

It is not my province here to go into a discussion of prohibition, although from the police point of view it would be a god-send to any community. As a cause of crime the habit of strong drink takes high rank. As a cause of want and misery and despair it ranks equally high. From the police point of view it is not germane to discuss what may be the best means of attaining temperance. We can say emphat-

ically, however, that if intemperance in the use of hard liquor could be prevented the police courts would lose very much of their business. At a meeting of the Police Inspectors in New York when the subject under discussion was the cause of crime, one experienced Inspector gave it as his judgment, which seemed to be generally concurred in, that drink was the biggest single cause of crime.

Although there may be difference of opinion as to the wisest way to meet the vice of intemperance, every one will agree that war without quarter should be waged against habit-forming drugs. To the policeman charged with the duty of preventing crime the drug menace looms especially large. He sees person after person driven to crime by the insatiable, burning desire for the drug, the demand of the body being so insistent that the drug addict is ready to commit about any crime to get the drug, or to steal anything which

he can turn in to purchase the drug. The police officer, too, finds that many a crime is committed by criminals who have put themselves on edge, so to speak, for the occasion by a dose of their favorite drug, so the policeman has come to the conclusion that if the traffic in these deadly drugs could be stopped much crime would be stopped also.

We estimate that in New York City there are about 200,000 persons who have this drug habit in some form or other. By this is meant not simply that this large number of individuals have a certain method of relaxation which they indulge in once in a while; what is meant is that 200,000 individuals are in the grip of a habit which holds them like a vise and which unmans them, breaking down their physical and mental and moral selves with relentless certainty. The mental defective whom we have been discussing and who we have pointed out is a danger to the

community, because his adult body is governed by a child's mind, seems from many points of view to be less of a danger than the drug fiend, for while both are irresponsible and likely to do strange unexpected things, the mental defective may be rather a passive character, harmless, and even likable, while the drug addict is driven to action, to unguided, ungoverned action, not only by his craving for the drug, but by reason of the exalted stimulation he gets from it.

The drug habit seems to be about as easy to acquire as it is difficult to check. For this reason, in spite of all the laws that have been passed and in spite of all the efforts to enforce them, it has grown to great proportions. One drug user in the neighborhood is a source of infection, practically sure to corrupt a number of others. The thoughtless person who incautiously takes a sniff of the drug to see what it feels like may be enmeshed as a

result of this one hapless act. Misery loves company, and so the practice naturally spreads; but there is in addition the commercial motive that impels illicit drug vendors to try to increase the number of their customers. It is a trade in which the salesman does not have to bother his head about getting repeat orders; after he has made his initial sale his customers come of themselves, without any further solicitation on his part. It is a case where the trader has little difficulty about the demand and where the profits are so great as to put a tremendous premium on evading the law and by hook or by crook securing the supply.

The laws that have been enacted in Washington and by state legislatures for the purpose of suppressing and controlling this evil have been more or less successful. They have been successful in that the whole thing is now against the law; they have been unsuccessful in that

no appreciable progress has been made in reducing the number of victims.

From a medical or reformatory point of view these cases are most difficult to cure. There are treatments which certainly have had effect, but the effect is a physical one only, having as its purpose such a cleansing of the human system as shall remove the craving for the drug which rendered the patient powerless to resist it. The treatment does not provide a cleansing of the victim's moral nature; it does not inject stiffening into the backbone; it does not furnish new acquaintances or new surroundings for the patient racked by both the disease and its cure, or a new environment which shall give him a different outlook on life from what he had before. He is "cured," but he is not made stronger to resist the temptation he yielded to before, and from force of circumstances he probably will go back to live under the same conditions which failed to prevent

his falling before. Our experience seems to indicate that in order to convert a drug user into a healthy citizen again you must have, first, a deep desire on his part to shake off the grip that has been squeezing his life out of him; then you must help him along by medical treatment of some kind, with occasional stimulation and nourishment, until he physically is free of the clutch of the drug; and after this—well, it is really here that the actual "cure" begins, and this beginning is not a matter of administering drugs or putting behind barred doors; it is a matter of an individual's adjusting himself to his environment, by good fortune or by his own perseverance or by the help of friends—it does not matter which—adjusting himself so that he can go ahead, continue his life without enslavement. For it is a pure state of slavery that he is in while the drug is his master, while he cannot get away from it, while he has to obey its behest at

any cost, and regardless of how it may violate his principles of life. It is a far more genuine case of slavery than existed between the Southern planter and his human chattels.

In the long run it is a losing game to try to meet this question as we are now trying. State laws are weak, because it is so easy to get over the border into another state. The Government regulatory laws have been helpful and have accomplished a certain amount of good, but all our laws and all our regulations have fallen so far short of stamping out the drug traffic that we cannot for a moment rest satisfied with the present methods. We believe that there is no effective way of coping with the evil except by drastic Federal legislation, which absolutely prohibits; and what it does not prohibit, monopolizes. If no drug could come into the country or be made in the country, except as brought in or manufactured by the Government, and

then be distributed by a careful system of licenses, so that it would surely fall into the hands only of reputable doctors, we should come pretty close to shutting off the source of supply, and we could then begin to try to accomplish the "cure" of the victims who are now among us, without being oppressed by the gloomy thought that for every one patient cured probably a dozen more had fallen victims. Nothing will answer short of absolute prohibition, and with human nature as it is there is no way that prohibition can be accomplished except by the strong arm of the Government.

We are told that drastic action of this kind would be unconstitutional. If this is so, if absolute Federal control of habit-forming drugs cannot be assumed by the Federal Government, it is certainly time that the country should be apprised of the situation and should realize that we have this eager, insidious, death-dealing disease

sneaking and stealing about in our midst, corrupting our boys and girls, making them slaves to its malicious will, debauching their bodies and their souls, driving them to crime, to unnatural vice, and making them in turn its own missionaries of destruction. If we are right in sizing up the character and extent of the evil, the difficulty of cure, the frightful effect of the habit once achieved, and if we are further right in concluding as a result of the most earnest effort to battle with this dragon under existing laws, that there is no way to subdue it except through Federal monopoly and control, then we can arrive at no other conclusion than that if the Constitution will not permit this, there must be remedial action by those that have power.

VII

CONVICTS

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A class of men peculiarly likely to commit crime is made up of those who have already committed it. If a man does a criminal act, is convicted and goes to jail, he comes out into the world again with the brand of the convict. People don't want to give him a job and you can't much blame them; it isn't a recommendation of character to have served a term in state's prison. And in addition to the fact that he faces this difficulty in securing an honest job, is the further fact that he knows something about crime, having already tried his hand at it, and having doubtless learned more of the technique of crime in jail, so that he is faced with the dilemma of making his living by crime, or not making it at all.

That is the prison graduate; that is the outlook of the man who now populates our jails. The course of least resistance for him when he gets out of jail is to earn a living by crime. If he is successful he will go ahead and live on the proceeds of his burglaries. When he is caught he will simply go to jail again for a few years, brush up his technique by comparing notes with other experts, and come out again to go through the same process. It always seems to me that one of the most short-sighted things modern civilization indulges in is the practice of arresting, convicting, discharging; rearresting, reconvicting and redischarging these criminals. The treatment that they get makes it almost certain that they will continue a life of crime.

Much has been done to try to alleviate the situation. Much can be accomplished by the proper treatment of these men while they are incarcerated. They should be treated fairly, given proper places to

sleep, proper food, proper exercise, but above all they should be taught some trade at which they can earn an honest living when they get out. In the effort to prevent crime we are puzzled as to what is the proper course of action in a great many particulars; in this matter of the convict, however, we know what should be done, if we will only do it. If we are to have any hope that men discharged from prison will try to earn an honest living it is a *sine qua non* that they must be able to earn it. If possible, they should be a little better at their trade than men who are not handicapped by such a record. Any prison where men are not treated fairly so as to keep them in a good healthy condition, and where they are not forced to learn how to earn an honest living, is failing in its duties to the community. The convict has a hard enough row to hoe when he gets out to overcome his record, even if he is mechanically capable; if he is not,

his outlook is black. But even if he is skilful, the fact that he has served a term in prison acts like a weight around his ankle when he steps out from prison walls into sunlight and goes about it to make an honest livelihood. In times past he undoubtedly has been confronted with the enmity of police forces, who have hounded him from place to place, or in case he found a job, have forced him to pay blackmail in return for their not telling his employer what his record was.

We have recognized clearly that we should be preventing crime in a direct way if we could steer prison graduates into honest ways of living. To try to help this work along I went up to Sing Sing the summer before last, having been asked by Mr. Osborne, whose work there has been of such great service, to come up and talk to the convicts. At first I couldn't picture to myself any happy outcome to such an experience as the Police Commissioner who

perhaps had been instrumental in sending most of the men to the institution, standing up in a hall at their mercy, trying to address them. I remember telling one of the Deputy Police Commissioners that I had been asked to do this and should like to do it, but I couldn't think what in the world to say to them. He answered: "That's all right, go up and tell them you are glad to see them all there!"

Warden Osborne gave me a chance to talk right after the men's luncheon at noon day. He stood me up on a table in the big mess hall, a wide, lowceiled hall, with ungracious benches and narrow tables on which were what looked like a great many formidable missiles in the shape of ironware plates and cups. The men applauded my introduction, and I told them I felt much relieved at the reception, since I hadn't been quite sure whether I should be greeted with applause or plates. I told them that as long as I was in charge of

the New York Police Force there was going to be no hounding of convicts; if they tried to break the law we should try in every way we could to prevent them, and to arrest them if they succeeded. If, however, they came to New York to earn an honest living and wanted to lead an honest life, we would not merely give them a chance, but would help them, would try to assist them to find jobs. I pointed out emphatically that they must do their full part; that we were not moved by sentimentality; that our job was to keep down crime, and that we felt we could help to keep it down by making it as easy as possible for them to earn an honest living; if they would do their part we would give them all the help we could.

After the meeting was over we were talking with a group outside in the prison yard. The subject had been broached of having a baseball match between the Police Department nine and the convict nine.

This was a rather new conception for me, and I told them I was afraid it wouldn't do, for I didn't know what might happen if a convict happened to steal second base on the police catcher! I asked the men what they had thought of my talk, saying that I was afraid it had been a little too stiff, perhaps; that I had seemed rather harsh in emphasizing so strongly that they would have to do their part; that they would have to make good. One prominent member of the prison community replied: "Oh, that's all right; you didn't go too strong on that stuff; the only stuff we can't stand is the Prodigal Son stuff."

Some of these convicts have come to the police and we have tried to help and stand by them. Many of them have had a very hard time, and some of them, a distinct minority, seem to have the habit of crime so strongly stamped upon them that it is a discouraging task to try to get over it. One case comes especially to my attention.

The summer before last I was invited to dine with some thirty ex-convicts in the Collegiate Club of Columbia University. We had an interesting dinner; they spoke very frankly and told me what they thought of me and my associates and of all others who were of the same profession. After dinner there was one young man I remember especially, cleanly built, bright-eyed. He told me what his name was and I remembered him at once as an expert pickpocket. He said he had given it all up, the old evil life; had got a good job where he was working steadily; had gathered his family together again, the wife and children, and was finished with the old life and well on his way in the new. Three weeks later he was arrested. He had been in an elevator in a large department store; on the same elevator was a woman with a handbag hanging on her arm, and he said he just couldn't help it; it was so easy he had to reach out and open

the handbag. She detected him at it before he had taken anything. He didn't deny it and said to the detective who took him into custody that he believed if they cut his hands off he would open handbags with his mouth.

Another man came to us with a record of three convictions for pocket picking. He came to headquarters, and through our efforts and the assistance of some friends he was set up in the grocery business. After a few months in this he failed and another job was obtained for him at $12 a week. He wasn't satisfied with this; he seemed to have rather the feeling that the world owed him a better living than was represented by $12 weekly. He hadn't been at this job more than ten days when the Sixty-ninth regiment came back to town and there were large crowds along the street to watch it. He mingled among the crowd at Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue and was in the act of pick-

ing a woman's pocket when a detective who had been watching his suspicious actions took him into custody. He couldn't give any reason why he had tried to do this. He said he had thought he was safely out of his old ways.

These two men are examples of what we call the emotional type of criminal. The people in charge of the Police Welfare Bureau put it as follows:

"The emotional type is made up of the kind of man who is weak and spineless and whose emotions are easily swayed one way or the other. He usually commits petty offenses, such as pocket picking and petty larcenies. He is much affected by sentimentality, and at the slightest encouragement seems ready almost to boast and be proud of having been in prison; instead of ingenuously making an effort to blot out his bad record he takes pleasure in talking about it; he is a sentimentalist. Men of

this kind come to the police and in ten minutes are making the most solemn oaths that they will go straight. All these men are placed in positions where there is as little temptation to steal as possible. They do not seem to be entirely responsible. Two days after a man of this type was sent to a good job he was arrested and later convicted of grand larceny. All of the seven men who have gone wrong during the past few months have been of this sentimental type."

The great majority, however, of the men who have come to us are making good, that is, they are still employed and making their living honestly. Many of them have stood up stoutly against all sorts of discouragements and obstacles. This letter, received by a policeman from a man who had served a sentence in Sing Sing and had come to us for assistance, will serve as an example:

"Dear Sergeant: Your recent letter received and I have been very busy since. I have delayed answering the same until I suppose it seemed as if I neglected it. Now, I wish to thank you for your interest in my welfare, and you can't realize how much I appreciate it. I have kept my job as bookkeeper at $18 a week and expect a larger salary in the near future. This job has given me an opportunity to get my family together again and get a fresh start. I have learned a lesson which I shall have the benefit of for the remainder of my life, and there is not enough money in existence to tempt me to go through again what I just have. I shall always remember the treatment and kind encouragement I received from you."

The type of convict that is pretty sure to succeed if he once makes up his mind to do so is the unemotional type. Usually men of this kind have committed really

serious offenses, and are hard and without sentimentality. They desire to go straight, not for any emotional reason but because their own hard good sense tells them that they can't beat the game, and they believe it is more to their advantage to try to lead an honest life.

The treatment of law breakers should be governed primarily by the interest of the public. If a man defies the ways of life which the majority have ordained shall be followed, he has put himself outside the pale, and should be kept there until the public has reason to believe that he has repented of his ways and will not again offend if allowed to be at large once more. There is much to be said in favor of the indeterminate sentence, according to which, when a man has been convicted of a serious crime, he is kept in custody until competent officials are satisfied that he no longer has the will to do wrong.

VIII

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Modern city life for boys is full of unwholesome features. Boys must be active, they must play, they must exercise their growing muscles and sinews, and their growing brains. I suppose a boy can be kept still, even day after day, and perhaps month after month, but it is not good for the boy, and doesn't help to develop him into the right sort of man. For real men are bred from real boys, and a real boy is active, restless; nature goads him into a state of mental and muscular uneasiness so as to keep him growing. If the uneasiness cannot find outlet in activity growth is slow, or is stopped. If the form of activity is wholesome, if the fortunate boy can learn and play as young human animals are meant to learn and play, then the

chances are good that he will evolve into a wholesome, sound and vigorous man. But if the only ways to be active open to an unlucky youth are unwholesome, the outlook for him is unpromising.

The city boy nowadays is apt to be hard put to it in the endeavor to find a chance to play. Pavements and brick walls are sorry substitutes for fields and woods and streams. If he tries to play ball in the streets, the first he knows—smash goes someone's window or off goes some crabbed grown-up's hat! And the boy is blamed; if he doesn't look out, the policeman's attention will be directed to him. There isn't much he can do in the street that doesn't cause him to make a nuisance of himself to someone, for rollicking, natural boys, and occupied, serious adults can't get along together in a small space like a city street unless they make such substantial mutual concessions as will be tantamount to giving up what they are

really after. The older ones must surrender their desire to pursue their ways in quiet, undisturbed by noise, and undismayed by missiles; and the younger ones must forgo the abandon and recklessness of play which really is just what is needed to make it worth while, and, although they don't know it, to bring out and foster the qualities of sturdy manhood.

Of course, this is an actual situation, and we must make the best of it. The trouble is that we have been too ready to make the worst of it. The easiest way is to express regret, to wonder why somebody else doesn't do something about it, and then—confound that boy who's always bumping into me on his roller skates! This way—we might as well face it—is fairly directly calculated to bring a boy to the conclusion that about anything he does that he wants to do is wrong. And if the boy's parents are not well off, if they both have to work to make the ends meet, if

perhaps there's only one, if the struggle to provide warmth and food and clothing is so bitter that there isn't time or capacity to pay any attention to making home pleasant for the children, then the boy—he's only a boy—so easily bumps over the obstacle of conscience, which never had a chance to develop, and so easily slips into the habit of doing the things he likes to do, unhampered by any thoughts of right and wrong. If we go a step further, and consider the boy whose home is not only poor, but poisoned by drunken, or mentally defective, or drug using, or even just chronically cross parents—what chance has that boy?

All our sympathies go out to him, the individual poor boy, and we stand ready to help. I wonder if we also think often of what this means to the nation, this wholesale bringing into the world and rearing to manhood of thousands, and hundreds of thousands of youths under

conditions which do not give them a fair fighting chance to become the kind of men the nation needs if it is to become strong and intelligently self-governing.

If a city Police Department wishes to do all it can to prevent crime, it must take note of these boys, and try to see what can be done to remove the causes that lead them into wrong. For innocent play either is, in the eye of the law, crime, or points the way to it. And if a boy has to depend on the street for his play, and has no real home, or a home where the influences are negative or evil, that boy, though normal in every way, and just as good as any other boy, is growing up under conditions full of temptation to crime, and must have enlightened police attention.

It is a little hard for the policeman to give such boys the kind of attention that would be most likely to help them. In the first place, the officer isn't used to this kind of police work, this duty of be-

friending a troublesome boy instead of chasing him and trying to "get him right." Secondly, the boy isn't used to it either; for generations he has looked on the policeman as his inveterate enemy, and he views with genuine distrust any attempt at peace negotiations.

A move toward a better understanding can be made by having policemen, in uniform, go to the public schools and talk to the children, impressing on them the fact that the police are the friends of the children, and want to help them. Junior Police Forces, too, work very strongly to bring about a helpful relationship. There are now several thousand of these young policemen in New York. They are organized in the different precincts, under the charge of the captains, and are drilled, exercised and instructed by policemen. They have regular meetings, usually in a schoolhouse, and if possible in connection with a Community Center. They take no

direct police action, but they help the police in various ways: by their own good conduct, by doing what they can to make other boys behave properly, by reporting things they notice, according to instructions.

They are ambitious to do all they can, but it has been found inadvisable to have them take corrective action themselves. This was brought forcibly home to us by the plight an energetic Junior Police Lieutenant found himself in as the result of faithful performance of duty. While out on patrol he came across a woman who was flagrantly violating a city ordinance; I think she was emptying garbage into the ash barrel. He reproved her, and naturally supposed he had corrected that trouble. A few days later, however, he found she was at it again, brazenly ignoring his tolerant warning. He started to reprove her really severely this time, whereupon she took that Lieutenant of

Police over her knees and spanked him! In spite of all these risks, the plan of organizing the boys in a precinct in these junior forces, entirely managed by regular policemen, has helped surprisingly to bring about a truer understanding between the police and the boys, and to stimulate both: the boy to an active pride in identifying himself with the forces of law and order, and in keeping himself fit, and trying to do his part to help out, and the policeman to a broader conception of his responsibilities to the neighborhood. For the neighbors in Junior Police precincts have in most cases taken great interest. Citizen committees have been formed to advise with the Captain and help him, and to raise money for uniforms. The effect has been to bring the police into contact with the better elements of the community, in a way which has made it possible to avoid many of the old misunderstandings, and to discover new ways into which the

police service could be directed to make things safer and more wholesome for the law-abiding. The traditional contact of the police was with the worst elements of the community only. The good effects of the Junior Police idea could be attained only in small part unless the policemen themselves handled the junior organization. If civilians were in charge of it, it would be a Junior Police Force only in name, and many of its most beneficent results would be impossible.

To help out in the problem of play, the Police Department designated as play streets a number of blocks in the parts of the city where population teems, excluding through vehicular traffic from them, and providing them with play leaders, through the generous help of the Parks and Playground Association and other societies. This has helped a little, but only a very little in comparison to the size of the problem, for our parks, playgrounds,

and play streets all together do no more than make a good beginning. Added to the fact that there are not enough of them, is the difficulty and expense of transportation from some crowded sections, and the almost universal preference of children to play in the street in front of their doorstep rather than go to a playground. The dislike of parents to let the children out of their sight emphasizes this, so we frequently see well equipped playgrounds with only a few children in them, while the contiguous streets are filled with romping young ones.

This situation can be bettered enormously if the custom would only spread of making it possible for children to play safely on roofs, and of changing back yards into play spaces. In districts where there are many children, there are also acres of space, available right at the back door step for play, yet useless because chopped up by fences into diminu-

tive, untidy, patchwork yards. If the fences were razed, a good space would be yielded, where the boys and girls of the houses affected could play to their hearts' content, without the danger of being cut down and maimed or worse by some carelessly driven vehicle, or of being subjected to any of the unwholesome influences that sometimes are met with in the streets. A start has been made in New York with the back yard transformations, and their success has been unqualified. The children play there by day, and by night in summer the parents sit there in peace and quiet, in blessed relief from the stifling hot rooms. It must be that this custom will spread, if for no other reason because landlords will find that tenants prefer apartments that have rear playgrounds available.

Many a boy who has already got into bad company, or already tasted sweets stolen by his own hand, can be readily res-

cued from the usual fate of such conduct if a wise older person will befriend him, and switch him over to the right road. Who could do this better than the policeman? And whose proper duty is it more than his to leave no stone unturned for the purpose of changing an incipient criminal into an honest man?

To see what might be done in this way we put into operation the plan of designating Welfare Officers, one in each residential precinct, with the single duty to look for boys who are going wrong and then try to help them to go right. Think of the gain to the city if we can take a boy who otherwise would become a burglar, who has started to master that profession, and turn him into a self-respecting, self-supporting citizen. That is what these Welfare Officers are working for.

Here is an example of the kind of work they do. On the upper West Side a boy about twelve years old was found loitering

in the streets during school hours. The Welfare Officer, in citizen's clothes, struck up an acquaintance with him, and found he hadn't been to school for fourteen months. The principal of the school confirmed this, saying that over a year ago she had sent him to the school physician, who had pronounced him tuberculous, and she could not keep such cases. The officer's report goes on:

"I then took this boy to his home, and interviewed the mother, who is janitor of the premises. She has 2 other small children, John, 8; William, 12; and Francis, 7 years old. This woman is in destitute circumstances. She informed me that her husband had abandoned her and the children about a year ago and she was unable properly to provide for said children."

That report is of the 18th of January. On the 23rd the patrolman makes a supplementary report:

"Upon informing the Captain as to the condition of this boy and family he instructed me to purchase shoes and stockings for the said William, which I have done, the above articles amounting to $4.90. Also communicated with the Lieutenant in charge of the Health Squad, who has instructed me to convey this boy to the tubercular clinic where he would be examined. On Jan. 21 accompanied this boy to the above clinic. Examined by the doctor who said the boy was not suffering from tuberculosis but was a case of malnutrition. He further instructed me to return the boy to the school and he would take the matter of his absence up with the principal."

On January 25 the report is:

"Accompanied William to Public School ——, interviewed the principal, informed her of doctor's instructions, obtained the

boy's transfer card so he could attend the same school as his brothers. Accompanied the mother to the Domestic Relations Court, assisted her in obtaining a warrant for her husband for abandonment. The husband is now a resident of Syracuse, and a representative of the Dept. of Charities said she would defray the expenses of the execution of the warrant and the Dept. of Charities would take care of the family until such time as the husband was located. The mother has received to date $5 from the Dept. of Charities."

January 27:

"William, Sr. was brought back from Syracuse on a warrant issued by the Magistrate, arraigned in the Domestic Relations Court. The case had to be adjourned until Jan. 29, because Mrs. was confined to the hospital suffering from blood poisoning in the right arm. The 3

children were taken charge of by the Children's Society until the mother returns from the hospital and is able to take care of them."

On January 29 he reports finally:

"Mother returned from the hospital. Father arraigned in Court, where he was placed on probation and directed to pay $6 per week. Children released and returned home. No cause for further action at present."

The Welfare Officers found plenty of work waiting for them. Boys were playing truant, were smoking cigarettes when eight or ten years old, were taking drugs, were practising unnatural habits, were stealing fruit, candy, coal, were spending their time in pool parlors, were trying to make friends with young men of questionable character. Or they were just run-

ning wild, like healthy young animals, and the wildness was bringing them into conflict with the ordered tameness of city life. The Welfare Officer was to get acquainted with the boys, treating each one as a separate problem, and trying to hit upon just what might be needed to swing the boy away from his bad habits or associates. Sometimes the mere friendship of the big brother policeman was enough, sometimes father or mother or friend, when spoken to, was able to do what was necessary, having had no idea of what the boy had been doing. Often boys were taken to settlements, or clubs of various kinds, were given work, if old enough, were introduced to other boys of better character than those they had fallen in with. The policeman didn't preach, he didn't threaten; he made friends with the boy, appealed to his pride, and tried to find a wholesome outlet for his natural activity. It was extraordinarily satisfactory work. Thou-

sands of boys were helped, and we would not admit one failure, the nearest approach to failure being cases where we had *not yet* succeeded. And results were already showing, in improved order in neighborhoods where boy-population was large, and in the reduction of juvenile offenders.

The same work was done, to a less extent, for girls. It was not so extensive as the work with boys, for the two reasons that girls didn't seem to get into such bad ways as boys, and that policemen were more successful with boys. Women police officers, working among girls along these lines, could produce splendid results.

As another means of bringing about a better understanding between police and children we started the custom of Christmas trees in Station Houses. Some forty-five thousand children were invited to these trees, all of whom had been carefully looked up, principally by the Welfare Of-

ficers, and been found to be in such pitiful circumstances that otherwise they would probably have had no glimpse of Christmas except what they might get through shop windows. Christmas cheer overflowed. The policemen, from Inspector and Captain down to patrolman, outdid themselves in warm-hearted welcome to the small guests and their parents. The Captain told them they were always to remember that policemen wanted to be their friends, and different officers entertained them with song and dance and story. The trees were brilliantly illuminated, and laden down with bright things, and the Station Houses themselves, those dreary, forbidding, mysterious places, had been furbished and decorated and hung with Christmas evergreens till their most habitual frequenter would never have believed he could be in the same place. The presents, sweaters, caps, gloves, or shoes, and some candy, some fruit, and a toy, for

every child got something to wear, something to eat, and something to play with, were given out by policemen in full uniform. As one beaming, perspiring patrolman said to me: "Well, Commissioner, I believe those kids will believe now, when we tell 'em to cut out hitching on wagons, that it's a friend that's talking!"

The patrolman was right. The Santa Claus policemen could never again be perverted into Bogies to frighten those children. Both parents and children had seen with their own eyes the touch of human kindness in those very "cops" whom they had always instinctively given a wide berth to. A start had been made toward a relationship between the policeman and the neighborhood that could not fail to help both.

IX

CONCLUSION

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The preventive policeman is the policeman of the future. However faithfully he does it he can no longer fully justify himself by simply "pounding the beat." The public will look to him to prevent crime, and to prevent from falling into crime those who may be under temptation, be they children, or drug users, or defectives, or normal human beings who already bear the convict mark, or who are pushed to the wall in the battle of life. Police Forces must try to keep crime from claiming its victims as Boards of Health try to keep plague and pestilence away. And Police Forces are bound to rise to this conception of their profession, for the public will demand it and will reward success, and the feeling of *noblesse oblige* will surge

through their ranks and bring with it devotion to the larger duty and increasing capacity to fulfil it.

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